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Award Number:

W81XWH-10-1-0593

TITLE:

Probiotic (VSL#3) for Gulf War Illness

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REPORT DATE: October 2015

TYPE OF REPORT: Annual

PREPARED FOR: U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command

Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5012

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT: Approved for Public Release;

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE*Form Approved*
OMB No. 0704-0188

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1. REPORT DATE

October 2015

2. REPORT TYPE

Annual

3. DATES COVERED

8 Sep 2014 - 7 Sep 2015

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

Probiotic (VSL#3) for Gulf War Illness

5a. CONTRACT NUMBER**5b. GRANT NUMBER**

W81XWH-10-1-0593

5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER**6. AUTHOR(S)**

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5d. PROJECT NUMBER**5e. TASK NUMBER****5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER****7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)**Western Institute For Biomedical Research
Salt Lake City, UT 84148**8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER****9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)**U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command
Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5012**10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)****11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)****12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT**

Approved for Public Release; Distribution Unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**14. ABSTRACT**

The overall objective of the study is to determine whether probiotic VSL#3® will improve 1) intestinal symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome and 2) non-intestinal symptoms (fatigue, joint pain, insomnia, general stiffness and headache) associated with IBS. All of these symptoms are part of the Gulf War illness. We screened our first participant in September 2013. Overall we have screened 65 and 30 randomized and 9 Gulf War Veterans are waiting for arrival of study drug. Our efforts are ongoing to recruit more Gulf War veterans. The first batch of stool samples have been sent to Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory microbiota analysis.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

Irritable bowel syndrome, probiotic, Gulf War Illness, diarrhea

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:

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17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT

UU

18. NUMBER OF PAGES**19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON**

USAMRMC

a. REPORT

U

b. ABSTRACT

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c. THIS PAGE

U

19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)

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Introduction:

Gastroenteritis plays a major role in changing intestinal microflora. More than one third of Gulf War (GW) veterans report gastroenteritis during deployment and it is a risk factor for development of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) after deployment. We also demonstrated that there is a strong association between IBS and extra-intestinal disorders (e.g. fatigue, joint pains, insomnia, generalized stiffness, and headache). This would suggest that IBS as well as extra-intestinal disorders in GW veterans have a unifying etiology. There is scientific evidence that probiotics by restoring normal gut flora improve symptoms of IBS. Probiotics have also been shown to improve arthritis and fatigue by changing fecal flora. This is the basis for our present protocol to study the effect of probiotics on GW illness.

Body:

During the last on year the following goals were accomplished:

- We have screened 65 GW veterans and enrolled 30 from the beginning of the study. Of the 30 veterans enrolled in the study, 28 have completed the study. Nine Veterans are waiting to receive medications. One Veteran withdrew before starting study medication and second did not take the study medication as directed.
- The first set of stool samples have been sent to the Lawrence Berkeley laboratory for microbiota analysis.
- We received the list of Gulf War Veterans in the Salt Lake City area from the Defense Manpower Database. This increased our study population. We are in the process of requesting a second batch of list of GW Veterans. We plan to send recruitment letters to these veterans informing them about the study.

Key Research Accomplishments.....

- We have recruited 30 Gulf War Veterans and 9 waiting for study medication.

Reportable Outcomes.....

Nil.

Conclusion:

Study is ongoing at a good pace as we planned. We continue our recruitment efforts to increase our study enrollment. First set of stool and blood samples will be analyzed.

References.....

Nil.

Appendices.....

Nil.